

compressive force according to characteristics of said film, said characteristics including one or more selected from the group consisting of thickness and material of said film;

air-pressure generating means for generating from a single air source having an initial air pressure both a specified higher air pressure for moving said heater unit and a specified lower air pressure, lower than said higher air pressure, for controlling said compressive force; and

switching means for selectively switching between supplying to said air cylinder said higher pressure to thereby move said heater unit with respect to said film and supplying to said air cylinder said lower pressure to thereby control said compressive force.

REMARKS

Claims 6-23 remain in this application. Claims 1-5 have been withdrawn. Claims 6 and 18 are herein amended.

Independent claim 18 and claims 19-23 dependent therefrom were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112 due to insufficient characterization regarding the manner of controlling the compressive force. The phrase describing the compressive force has been herein amended to more clearly say that the controlling means serve to apply different compressive forces, depending on the material property of the film.

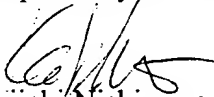
Claims 18-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102 as being anticipated by Fukuda (066), claims 6-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 over Fukuda (217) in view of Simionato and further in view of Kreager, and claims 21-23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 over Fukuda (066) in view of Simionato and further in view of Kreager. The Examiner characterized these cited references as disclosing the function of generating high-pressure air and low-pressure air but high-pressure air and low-pressure air are produced differently and in a different sense according to the present invention. In order to make this distinction clearer, independent claims 6 and 18 are herein amended and they now clearly say that air with a specified high pressure and air with a specified lower pressure are generated according to the present invention. The

specification describes the regulators as serving to provide "specified air pressures" in page 9 at line 24. Thus, the changes effected herein to claims 6 and 18 are supported by the specification and there arises no problem of introducing any new matter.

By contrast, none of the cited references discloses the step of generating air of a specified higher pressure or air of a specified lower pressure. Valves are opened and closed according to the cited references such that higher-pressure air and lower-pressure air can be supplied but there is no mention of providing air having any specified pressure from a single air source (having a unique pressure). Thus, the cited references, even if considered in combination, cannot predicate the Examiner's rejection either on the ground of anticipation or on the ground of obviousness. It is therefore believed that the present Amendment is properly responsive to the Office Action and hence that the application is now in condition for allowance.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the specification and claims by the current amendment. The attached page is captioned "Version with markings to show changes made."

Respectfully submitted,


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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claims 6 and 18 have been amended as follows:

6. (Twice amended) A packaging machine comprising:

a cylindrical chute;

means for bending an elongated bag-making film into a tubular form around said chute and causing side edges of said film to be mutually overlapped;

a heater unit for longitudinally sealing said mutually overlapping side edges of said film;

an air cylinder both for moving said heater unit between a sealing position at which said heater unit contacts said film and a retracted position at which said heater unit is separated from said chute and for controlling compressive force with which said heater unit at said sealing position compresses said film against said chute;

air-pressure generating means for generating from a single air source having an initial air pressure both a specified higher air pressure for moving said heater unit and a specified lower air pressure, lower than said higher air pressure, for controlling said compressive force; and

switching means for selectively switching between supplying to said air cylinder said higher pressure to thereby move said heater unit with respect to said film and supplying to said air cylinder said lower pressure to thereby control said compressive force.

18. (Amended) A packaging machine comprising:

a cylindrical chute;

means for bending an elongated bag-making film into a tubular form around said chute and causing side edges of said film to be mutually overlapped;

a heater unit for longitudinally sealing said mutually overlapping side edges of said film;

an air cylinder for moving said heater unit between a sealing position at which said heater unit contacts said film and a retracted position at which said heater unit is separated from said chute;

control means for controlling compressive force with which said heater unit at said sealing position compresses said film against said chute, said control means [controlling] varying said compressive force according to characteristics of said film, said characteristics including one or more selected from the group consisting of thickness and material of said film;

air-pressure generating means for generating from a single air source having an initial air pressure both a specified higher air pressure for moving said heater unit and a specified lower air pressure, lower than said higher air pressure, for controlling said compressive force; and

switching means for selectively switching between supplying to said air cylinder said higher pressure to thereby move said heater unit with respect to said film and supplying to said air cylinder said lower pressure to thereby control said compressive force.